

## CLAIMS

1. A self-checkout lane for goods transactions in a retail outlet, the self-checkout lane comprising a processor, an incoming goods path for receiving goods; first and second goods collection zones in communication with the incoming goods path; and a segregation device operable under the control of the processor to divert goods from the incoming goods path into one of the goods collection zones; wherein the incoming goods path includes a product scanner electrically coupled to the processor and operable to evaluate the total retail price of a plurality of goods; each segregated goods collection zone being at least partially bounded by a barrier device operable under the control of the processor to selectively prevent a customer from accessing the goods contained therein; and wherein the processor is configured:
  - (a) to operate the barrier device to prevent a first customer from accessing their goods from a goods collection zone until they have been paid for; and, once the first customer has paid for their goods,
  - (b) to operate the barrier device to enable the first customer to access their goods, and
  - (c) to operate the segregation device such that the first customer may remove their goods from their goods collection zone whilst a second customer introduces their goods to the incoming goods path.
2. A self-checkout lane as claimed in Claim 1, wherein each goods collection zone includes an integral weighing scale

electrically coupled to the processor, and wherein, for a given transaction, the processor is further configured to calculate a total weight of the said goods received in the incoming goods path and to compare the calculated total weight of the goods with a measured total weight of the same goods, the measured total weight being measured using an integral weighing scale once the goods are received in a goods collection zone.

3. A self-checkout lane as claimed in Claim 1, wherein a weighing scale in a goods collection zone is positioned beneath a conveyor.

4. A method of retailing using a self-checkout lane having an incoming goods path, first and second goods collection zones, and a segregation device operable to divert goods from the incoming goods path into one of the goods collection zones, the method being controlled by a processor and comprising the steps:

- (a) receiving a first customer's goods into the incoming goods path;
- (b) transferring the first customer's goods into the first goods collection zone;
- (c) receiving payment from the first customer for the goods in the first goods collection zone;
- (d) operating the segregation device in order to divert goods into the second goods collection zone; and
- (e) receiving a second customer's goods into the incoming goods path;

wherein the step of receiving the second customer's goods is undertaken whilst the first customer removes his goods from the first goods collection zone.

5. A method of detecting misappropriation of goods in a self-checkout lane in a store, the self-checkout lane having an incoming goods path and a goods collection zone, and goods being passed, in service, from the incoming goods path into the goods collection zone; the incoming goods path including a product scanner electrically coupled to a processor, and the goods collection zone including a weighing scale electrically coupled to the processor; the method being performed by a processor and comprising the steps:

- (a) receiving input from the product scanner identifying goods introduced by a customer into the incoming goods path;
- (c) calculating, by referring to a record of product weights, a total weight value representative of the total weight of the goods introduced into the incoming goods path;
- (d) receiving input from the weighing scale specifying the total weight of the goods once received in the goods collection zone; and
- (e) comparing the said total weight value with the said total weight of the goods and calculating any discrepancy between the said weights.

6. A method of detecting misappropriation of goods as claimed in Claim 5 wherein, if the said discrepancy is

greater than a predetermined value, the method further comprises notifying store personnel or operating an alarm.

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